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The Bus at Eagle River



The Bus at Eagle River

EAGLE RIVER is the county seat of Vilas County, Wisconsin.

Last fall a remodeled school bus, loaded with food, stopped there. Needy residents of the town gathered around to pick up their first month's supply of U.S. Department of Agriculture donated foods. (1170C1103-11) The food was delivered by the Lac Du Flambeau Indian Tribe, whose reservation is located in Vilas County.

This is the first time an Indian tribe has administered a food program for needy residents outside of a reservation.

Needy members of the Lac Du Flambeau Tribe, living on the reservation, have been receiving donated foods for eight years. The Tribal Council first requested the food in 1963.

Last fall, at the request of USDA, the tribal council agreed to expand the program to include all needy residents of Vilas County—a large order since the county boundaries include several times the 179 square miles of the reservation.

Records showed the need for food help in this area increased during the winter months. Summer and autumn seasons bring sightseers, vacationers, and more jobs to this pictur-

esque section of Northern Wisconsin. The donated foods program designed for the reservation has occasionally closed during past summers as business at the vacation facilities picked up.

County efforts to encourage winter vacations has helped the economy. Still, many residents tighten their belts when the snow begins to fall.

Last January participation in the expanded food program reached 900. The previous total, before expansion to all county residents, was around 400. An outreach effort, conducted by the county with the help of local newspapers

and radio and TV stations, help spread the news that anyone who needed food could get it.

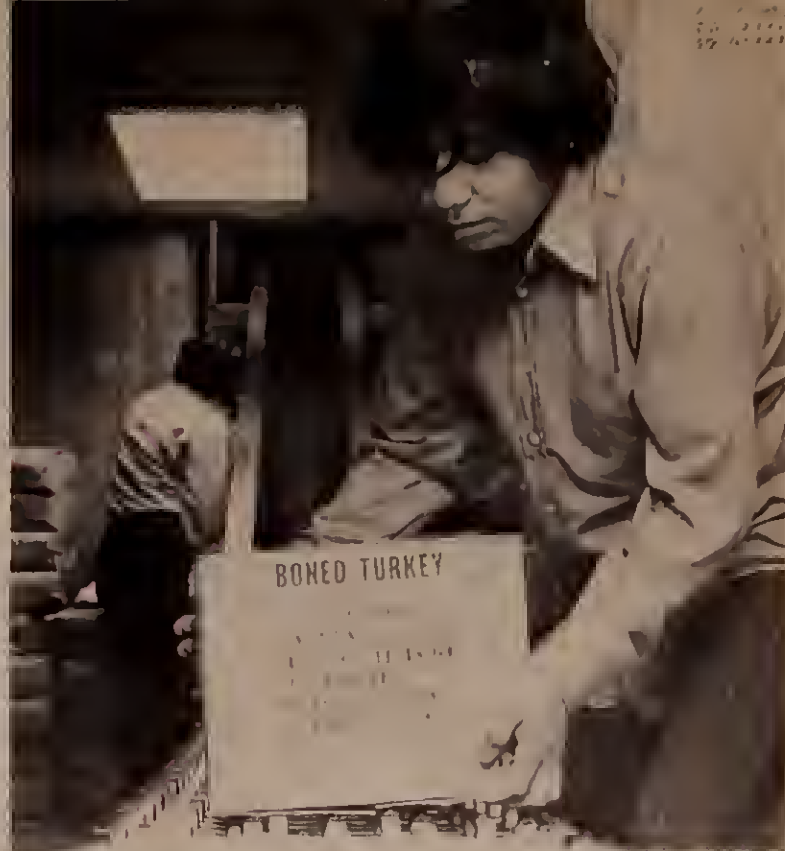
The bus delivers the food to nine locations in the county and despite an average of four feet of snow on the ground in winter, has not missed a delivery date.

Top USDA officials cited the Lac Du Flambeau Tribe's efforts as an outstanding example of how much good can be done through the United efforts of Federal, State, local and community bodies. "They have shown concern not only for the welfare of the Indians on the reservation, but also, in the administration of the program, for all needy citizens in Vilas County regardless of race."



Money to buy a second-hand school bus came from USDA funds available to states for operating expenses. The Lac Du Flambeau Tribal Council purchased the bus and improved their distribution facilities with USDA funds made available through the Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction. Tribe members load the bus (Above: 1170C1105-9) and distribute the food (Below: 0970C865-4).

Nationally, some 4,000,000 needy people in some 1200 counties now participate in the Donated Food Program.



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ON THE COVER: A young resident of Vilas County, Wis. is shown with USDA donated food distributed by the Lac De Flambeau Indian Tribe (1170C1104-11).

BELOW: Milk and juices supplied in the food program add important nutrients to the diets of needy Vilas County youngsters. (1170C1102-22)

